

A Lethal Business - Chapter 2

by redcheck15

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Summary: A sadistic murderer lies in wait at Baywatch. Unknown to him, Riggs and Murtaugh are not far behind, nor is the Foundation - and Michael Knight.

A Lethal Business - Chapter 2

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>
Author's note: This story and others like it in the series are primarily built upon the idea of various T.V. shows and movies crossing over. This simply means that the characters of various T.V. shows and movies exist in the same world.

>* redcheck15

>

>***Warning!!!***This story contains scenes of violence, profanity, and sexual innuendo. Rated R. Parental discretion advised. (This is NOT an erotic story, so don't go reading for the hope of satisfying your desires. Rather, there is one sex scene that is slightly descriptive, enough so that anyone offended by sexual misconduct can be rudely offended. It does, however, go with the story, and was hinted at in Knight Chapter 1. You were warned...)

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>
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>
Show: Knight Rider, Baywatch, and Lethal Weapon Crossover.

>Rating: R for violence, profanity and sexual scenes.

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>Warning: If you have not read Knight Chapter 1, please do so. Events leading up to this chapter can be found in Chapter 1. You can read this chapter by itself, as it finally involved Michael Knight, Kitt, and FLAG. Keep in mind, they are part of a plot which has been developing ever since Knight Prologue. It has taken a while to integrate them into the story. But when you have a Fan fiction Crossover involving three different pieces of fan fiction, it takes a while to develop a suitable plot. So please, if you have not read Knight Chapter 1 and Knight Prologue, take the time to do so. It will make things much clearer. Thank you. Now, on with the show...

>
Continue...

>

>Summery: Steve (as we know him) has the possession of BEAST, the most powerful attack vehicle of the TKR group. Now he has set out to exact retribution from the one who put him in prison...his ex-wife Erica West, who, after the disbanding of TKR, has taken up residence near Malibu Beach. But betraying his ex-employers, who are decidedly powerful, has put him on the run, with the bloodhounds not very far behind...
Rick's brother has been taken into police custody. Now its up to Rick to get him out, before the cops make him talk.

>With all the potentially TKR vehicles stolen, the government calls upon the only people that can help: the original Knight Rider team created by the late Wilton Knight. However, life is good, and the 'old' team isn't willing to come back to work for a government who discarded them like an old shoe. But when Lani is terribly injured and someone kills two of her friends with a TKR vehicle, the 'old' team reluctantly reopens FLAG. Devon, Michael, Bonnie and Kitt agrees to help find the TKR vehicles and those responsible, if only to prevent further bloodshed at the hands of FLAG technology. After the dust settles, they plan on handing the reins over the younger generation.

>

>
The past...

>

>A long, long time ago, one ultimate car, one driver, and a team of dedicated individuals set forth on a crusade to champion the cause of the innocent, the helpless, the powerless, in a world of criminals who operated above the law. They succeeded, then faded silently like phantoms into the past. Now, a new era of chaos and anarchy has called them back from the veils of time, to once again act as the guardians they once were. The new Foundation for Law and Government has fallen into ill repute; the old is resurrected in its place. 4 friends, once forced to silently fade into the past, have come forth into the present to once again fight for the fragile future.

>
Their daunting task: to free society from the rising wave of 21st century crime.

>

>Knight Chapter 2: Back in the Saddle...

>

>
The room was becoming stuffy in spite of the air conditioner going full out. Being a baking 32 degrees Celsius outside didn't help one bit. In fact, judging by the white surf breaking over the blue

water outside the headquarters windows, he would rather be out there than in here with the thick-headed LA Country Lifeguard Commissioner.

>Keith Beurt leaned with arms folded against the file drawer.
He
stared in exasperation at the Lifeguard Commissioner standing on

>the opposite side of the desk. "Listen ma'am, we already repeated
ourselves a hundred times," he told the stubborn woman.

"Newman

>and Jack had priority to dive and rescue the people in the car-"

>The tall, Californian tanned Commissioner shook the reports, cutting off Keith with her angry voice. "What, do you think I can't read? Is that it Mr. Beurt? Why don't you cut the crap and tell me what really happened. Your poor excuse at a cover-up is obviously lacking." She emphasized by smacking the pink papers with her left hand. "A man died in his car and your two star Lifeguards could not figure out how to open a fucking ordinary door!"
Keith let out a sigh. He regarded the ceiling before looking back at the Commissioner.

>"I already told you ma'am, it was an armoured car and the doors
were locked-"

>"Yes, yes, you already told me that," she said, cutting off Keith in the middle of his sentence. Her blue eyes regarded the two sitting in the chairs in front of the desk. "But as far as I'm concerned, I don't care what you say, you weren't the one at the scene. These two so-called Lifeguards, were."
Neely and Jack returned her stare without backing down.

>"What I want to hear from you two is why didn't you break into the car and try to rescue that person." She leafed through the reports.
"Let's see here. Ah, here we are. Car fell down 200 foot cliff. Victim suffered possible fractured skull, brain hemorrhaging, brain piercing by skull splinters, spinal cord damage (possibly broken), and possibly broken bones with internal bleeding. Oh, I forgot to mention victim appeared awake during preliminary diagnostic. So basically he was dying and you two did nothing!"

>Jack rolled his eyes.
Neely took a breath.

>"We already told you ma'am, the doors were locked, the glass unbreakable. There was no way in! Jack tried to break the window with a crowbar, but it bounced off!! It was an a-r-m-o-u-r-e-d money car," she said, speaking slowly so the Commissioner might understand her.
They had been at it for over half an hour now. First it was the Firefighting crews, then the police statements, and finally the Commissioner.

>

>It was time for the shift change. Manny Gutierrez drove his yellow Lifeguard truck slowly across the soft sand. His eyes darted constantly from side to side, watching for anyone in distress and mindful of the thousands of people on the beach. A group of scantily clad women waved jauntily at him from where their sunning towels were set up. He smiled and waved friendly-like back. He turned the wheel and gave the truck a little more gas to climb up the incline leading to the parking lot. Sliding in to the slot next to an identical truck, he put it in Park, turned off the ignition, and opened the door. Grabbing his sunglasses and clipboard, he climbed out before shutting the door.

>It was an awesome day. The summers were always the best at Malibu beach. He paused for a minute as the warm, salty wind blew gently past his face, before working his way to the front of the blue building. He climbed up the steps to the HQ balcony. As he reached

the top he spied Leslie and Tammy lounging around the balcony. For some reason, there seemed to be more Lifeguards milling around than the usual shift change. He knew that it was against regs for so many lifeguard to be slacking around, so something important must be up. In fact, looking closely, everyone seemed to be paying special attention to something inside.

>Dodging around the Lifeguards on the balcony, nodding and greeting the occasional familiar face, he peeked into the main room.
The TV was on and there was a regular crowd around the idiot box.

>
Some Lifeguards were working out on the torture workout equipment. But all of them seemed to be paying little attention to what they were doing. What they all seemed to be really doing was eavesdropping on the Lt's room.

>
Yup. Something was definitely going on.

>
There was Lt. Taylor Walsh, along with Captain Keith Beaurt (career oriented bastard), Commissioner what's her name (big tall mosquito voiced woman), Sgt. Garner Ellerbee, Jack Darius, April Giminski, Michael "Ironman" Newman, and Skylar Bergman, all packed into that tiny little room.

>
Must be pretty uncomfortable, he thought.

>
There went the Commissioner. She started yelling at Jack, who had rolled his eyes as Neely was speaking. Keith jumped into the fray, then Garner. Pretty soon, everyone could hear what was being said without really trying, because all the people in the small room were yelling at each other quite loudly.

>
Well, not exactly, Manny thought.

>
The Commissioner was yelling at everybody, whom in turn, were yelling right back at her.

>
Curious, he looked over to Leslie, who was coolly regarding him with her large eyes.

>
Cocking her head, she asked, "Ease dropping, are we?"

>
Making his way over to her, he responded, "Isn't everybody?"

>
"So what's going on? Does it have something to do with that big call that went out?"

>
Leslie nodded. "There was an attempt to heist an armoured car up the road, but it failed. Something went wrong and the car went over the cliff."

>
"So?"

>
Leslie raised her hands in an 'I don't know gesture'. "Nobody knows. Everything has been kept under wraps. The Commissioner has been in there for the past half hour with them. Seems like the Commish has a problem with the whole thing. She doesn't like the way it turned out."

>
"Great. Just great. I always knew the new Commissioner was a dork. She's such a stickler to rules!"

>
Leslie brushed a stray strand of hair the wind blew in her face and hooked it behind her ear. "Oh, just because you like to break them all the time doesn't make her a complete dick."

>
"Hey, I don't always break rules. I obey them--"

>
Leslie laughed. "Yeah, like when you're asleep."

>
"So now you know about as much as the rest of us."

>
Just then, the Lt's door slammed open and the Commissioner puffed her way out.

>
Activity in the building suddenly took on a vibrant life. Everyone tried to look busy. People rushed to their shifts, others tried to get out of the Commissioner's way.

>
She paid no attention. Ignoring everyone, she exited the

building, made her way down the stairs, and stormed around the corner toward the parking lot.

>
In her huffing and puffing, she completely failed to notice a tall structure in his way. She thus ended up running into a man wearing a dark jacket, blue pants, and dark sunglasses.

>
Being only five foot 11 inches tall, she kind of bounced off the large six foot two frame of the man wearing the sunglasses.

>The pissed off Lifeguard boss glared up, way up at the man's face.

>"Watch where you're going asshole!"

>The Commissioner stormed around the corner.

>He completely missed the man's tracking glance, then the universal gesture everybody knew.

>The tall man flipped her a long, extended middle finger.

>
Most of the Lifeguards milling on the balcony burst out laughing.

>Some cheered. Others just smiled. But in that one moment, when the man had raised his arm, a gust of wind blew by. The wind opened his jacket slightly.

>Marco's sharp eyes, which had been checking out the man's chest (she was a chest woman), caught sight of a holster and the squat, ugly shape of a gun.

>"Did you see that?" Marco said.

>Manny grinned. "Yeah! It's something I've wanted to do for a loooong time."

>Marco hit him in the arm. "Not that! The guy in glasses has a gun!"

>A gun?

>He took a look.

>Can't see anything.

>Manny realized the day was getting more interesting by the minute.

Everybody had heard of the 'incident', but nobody really knew anything other than the generals. But the interest was almost tangible. It was something he could almost feel. The new

Commissioner, who rarely ever put in any appearances at all, was news herself.

>He watched the man intently as he climbed up the stairs. Being a Californian, he was pretty tall himself, but this man fairly dwarfed him. They guy was just as tall as Mitch...

>The name came automatically to his mind.

>It brought with him a heartfelt sadness.

>Mitch Buchannon, former Captain and friend, had left Baywatch on mysterious circumstances a year and a few months ago, if anyone was keeping track of time.

>He had been a friendly giant. Everyone had liked him. They all missed seeing his tall six foot two frame, topped off with his short, wavy brown hair. His glinting blue eyes, playful gaze, and his booming loud voice always managed to brighten everyone's day. He had run the headquarters like a family. Everyone approached him like a father, and no one was ever shunned by him. His presence had turned Baywatch into more than just a team. There was a feeling of cohesiveness beyond the mutual bond of lifeguarding.

>When Mitch had left, and the new Captain filled the vacuum, Baywatch took a change for the worse. Sure Captain Keith Beurt could hold his own, but everyone disliked him. He was such a career oriented bastard, a person who was using his position to further his career. There was no family value to his sense of leadership, nor did he ever take the time to involve his personal life with them, unlike Mitch. It was just not the same. No one felt comfortable with going to his

house and telling him his or her innermost problems. They couldn't ask him to put them up for the night because of girlfriend problems, or ask him to help them out of a debt. No one ever felt that easy around him. The air of confidence, support, and love that Mitch exuded could never be measured up to. Keith just wasn't that father figure. The new Captain wanted a militant operation, not a family.
Mitch had been, and would always be, special.

>
All the Lifeguards on the balcony noticed the tall man making his way up the stairs. The laughter calmed down, then died out. The way the man casually looked around him spoke of the ease in which he carried himself. For some reason, Manny did not think he was out to harm anyone. If anything, the man carried himself in a friendly manner. But his manner imposed a...authority kind of feeling? What was he, an undercover cop of some sort? Rambo in duds?

>
Female and male Lifeguards alike swung their gazes around and watched the stranger make his way up the stairs. Conversations drifted to a halt.

>
The only sound was the soft wind and the 'clomp' of the man's shoe-wear on the stairs.

>
He had short, dark hair that was spiked forward. The sun glinted off a pair of very dark and expensive shades hid his eyes. His stride was even and his gait very smooth. The jacket he wore swayed slightly in the breeze as he ascended the stairs, revealing a tight white shirt underneath, which accentuated his slightly above average build.

>Marco, leaning against the porch, eyed the stranger up and down with obvious interest. Not very muscular, but obviously trim and athletic, probably only 3 to 4 percent body fat on him, her mind automatically evaluated.

>'Wow', she thought. 'He's sooooo good looking!!'

>Eyes from all around tracked the stranger.

>Normally, a stranger was no surprise at Baywatch HQ. It was a pretty friendly and open place. But this guy was different.

>Who would wear a black jacket on a baking hot day without breaking a sweat?!!! The tight fitting white shirt underneath, which showed off his pecs and chest, carried no sweat rings at all!
The man reached the top of the stairs.

>
It was silent outside, except for the far off voices of suntanners and swimmers. Everybody regarded the tall man.

>
Dark sunglasses swiveled around, then looked back...right at Manny.

>'Oh shit!' Manny thought, as the man made his way over to Manny, Lani, and Donna. The other lifeguards on the balcony, which was a little more empty now, moved out of his way like Moses parting the Red Sea.

>Manny looked up, while the man looked down at him. Sun glinted off his dark glasses, hiding his eyes in a pool of glassy darkness. It was like looking at Mitch, except this guy looked like he belonged in the military. The man's face carried defined cheekbones and a hard, pronounced jaw, giving him an overall killer look; killer because Marco was nearly swooning over. She was clutching the rail, which seemed to be the only thing holding her up.

>"Ummm, excuse me, but can you help me find a Erica West?" the man said in a rich, almost deep radio talk show host voice.

>'What the-? This guy is looking for Erica?' he thought. What would some cop want with Erica?

>Erica West had only worked here for the past year. She was the janitor for Baywatch HQ. A beautiful, quiet blonde, the woman mainly kept to herself. She was the enigma at HQ. No one knew much about her, and she always shied away from any conversation, as if she was

afraid of talking to people.

>Baywatch was a very open place, and it was good manners to be friendly with everyone around you, from the higher ups to even the support staff, and that meant janitors. But Erica West always seemed to defy that, and it frustrating to many of the friendly lifeguards. However, it was hard to stay mad at her for long, for the blonde lady carried around her a cloak of sadness - of grief. It was plain as daylight if one looked into her eyes.

>She was hurting badly, but from what no one knew, and she wouldn't tell. They only knew that there was a tremendous burden carried upon her back, and it hurt them all to see her suffer through it alone.
In the entire year, there had only been one time she had every dropped her guard.

>
It was during closing, when most people where leaving HQ, and Erica was just coming on shift. Lani was locking up one of the garages with her boyfriend Cody. A gang of men who had openly pursued her at the dance club the night before accosted Lani. When Cody interposed himself between them, a fight had ensued. Two female guards, Skylar and Lt. Taylor Walsh, tried to stop the fight.

>
The fight turned ugly then one of the men had taken out a knife and stabbed the Lieutenant, seriously injuring her.

>
Erica had chosen that moment to intervene-in a seriously eyepopping manner that belied her quiet personality.

>
She expertly disarmed the man with the knife, then swiftly kned him in the groin three times, sending him out of the fight. Grabbing the man that had Lani, she head-butted him, rocked him in the face with an elbow, and while he was reeling, neatly spun and swung her leg in a roundhouse kick. It had caught him on the chin, sending him to the ground and knocking him out.

>
The last man had known some martial arts. He was giving Cody a beating. Erica picked up the knife, and with a rage-filled scream that was unbecoming of the quiet woman, flung it with deadly accuracy at Cody's assailant. The knife had buried itself to the hilt in the man's back.

>
It had taken Erica maybe 7 seconds to take down three men, none who had shown any interest in getting up.

>
The incident had shocked everyone. It left them all wondering about Erica. Who was she really? Was she military? FBI? CIA? NSA? Was she some burned out cop whom had been washed out of the service? What had happened to the woman to hurt her so? What horrible secrets did she keep contained inside her?

>
But after the incident, she had once again retreated into her self-imposed silence, resurrecting her barrier of aloofness between her and them.

>
In the end everyone left her alone, to suffer her penance by herself.

>So it was normal when suspicion arose from the man's question. An intimate veil of protectiveness descended upon the group of lifeguards.

>"Sure," Leslie said, leaning against the railing and closer to Manny at the same time. "She's on a break."

>"Do you know when she'll be back?" the man ask.

>"No, I'm afraid I can't say. Sorry," she lied. It wasn't hard. The female lifeguard were always used to being hit on. When you were tanned, very athletic, and spent your time standing around in a very flesh-revealing swimming bikini, you got used to guys making plays for you all the time. Lying in order to get a guy off your back just became second nature.

>The man smiled disarmingly. "No problem. Thank you very much," he

said, politely inclining his head to Manny and Leslie before tracing his steps back down the stairs.

>Before he started down, Leslie called out. "Can I leave her a message?"

>The man glanced over his shoulder. "Oh, don't bother. I'm just a friend of her's. Just dropped by to see if she was in. I'll catch her at another time. Bye!"

>Leslie saw Marco's gaze drop to the man's rear end. Next thing she knew, she was staring at a great pair of buns that stretched out the pants material.

>She felt Manny nudged her, hard.

>Eyebrows raised, face innocent, she met Manny's accusing face with her most innocent, and friendly expression. "Just looking!"

>"Asta Lavista baby!" Marco said in a low, Arnold Schwarzenegger voice.

>The man slowed as he glanced back and gave Marco a charming smile.
Marco grabbed Manny's left arm. She squeezed. "This is a dream!
>Tell me this is a dream! He smiled at me! Oh wow!"

>Manny had muscular arms, but she squeezed him with a grip that rivalled a python. He tried shaking Marco's hand's off. "Oww! Hey hey, cut it out! Get away from me woman!!"

>Leslie started giggling as Manny struggled.

>After a few seconds of difficult prying, he managed to snatch his arm away from Marco's death grip.

>As if she noticed.

>Her stare never left the black-haired man. "He is sooooooo good-looking!!" Marco said, her eyes feasting on the man's retreating backside.

>"Close your mouth Marco, before you start drooling," Leslie told her.

>As he descended the stairs, Steve smiled. His pulse raced.
So this was Erica retreated after TKR bungled their mission and killed all those babies. She was so close he could feel it. It was like a fire, racing through his veins.
>
He walked through the parking lot to the re-painted silver F-150.
>After climbing in, he settled for the wait.
Revenge was at his fingertips.
>

>"Okay, so can anybody tell me what happened?" Keith asked the group assembled before him in the room.

>For a few seconds, the room grew uncomfortable as no one answered.
If the silence could say anything, it would have said:
"I wish Mitch were here."
>
Newman finally answered. "Neely and I used reserve breathers and approached the victim's car. Reaching it, I realized all the occupants were dead already from some type of explosion. Their bodies were completely mutilated and burned. The car itself was badly damaged by the explosion. There was no chance of opening the vehicle short of cutting it open."
>
Neely spoke up. "While Newman dove, I tried to get the door open on the car thing, but it was locked. I yanked as hard as I could on the handle, but it wouldn't open."
>
"That's because you didn't want to break you nails," Jack said.

>Jack put up his hand to ward off the blows, but Neely punched him twice in the arm.

>"Stop that you two, or I'll throw you out!" Keith scolded. "So what

happened next?"

>"Well, we pulled up just after they did. Skylar dove and helped Newman. I tried to open the door from the other side. Just like Neely said, the door wouldn't open. I observed the victim. He looked like he was dead Captain. I couldn't see how he lived through that. But then I saw his chest move. He was breathing. So I tried to bust my way in through the window with a crowbar."

>He shook his right hand. "I hit it as hard as I could, but the bar just bounced off like it was nothing. Prying didn't help either. It was too well-armoured."

>Skylar crossed her arms over her breasts. "The car in the water was fused by the explosion. Newman and I couldn't even get the doors open if we wanted to. So we surfaced for help."

>Newman nodded. "By then, the sky ambulance showed up. They sent down a man with an acetylene torch. We wasted the whole tank, before finally getting the door cut. But by then, the man was dead."
Keith heaved a sigh. "You know this isn't going to look good. Now I have to explain before a Judicial Inquiry Board why my people let a man die while in their care."

>
"We did the best we possibly could," Skylar protested.

>
"Well it wasn't good enough!" Keith retorted. He waved a hand.

>
"Dismissed."

>
Everyone left, slamming the door behind him or her.

>

>A sleek 1999 Pontiac Firebird WS6 cruised up the coastline, obeying the speed limit. The sun played off its black metallic paint. Chromed hubcaps shone with reflected light as they twirled with the spinning wheel, which in turn gripped the black tarmac of the highway with unerring accuracy.

>The window was down on both sides of the sports car.

>One elbow rested on the windowsill, another lightly guided the wheel with minimal effort.

>The wind, dragged into the cabin by the suction force of the open windows, whipped the short, curly brown hair of the driver.
Steel blue eyes squinted, reflexively scanning the road and the surf continuously. Michael Knight's attention was split between the alluring surf, and the front windshield.

>
"So you're telling me DUKE willingly attacked a car with his micro-lasers, and missiles, and two people?"

>
A transparent holographic image sat on the windshield. A wizened old man, his wavy hair grey through and through, sat behind a large oak table. He rested his laced fingers on the sturdy wood. Two large windows let in light behind him. Light white curtains diffused the sunlight. Behind him, pacing restlessly, was a middle-aged lady with long, brunette hair.

>
Even though the face was that of an 80-year-old man, a clear set of grey eyes looked back at the driver.

>
When he spoke, his voice was clear, and it carried a distinguished English accent. "Almost correct Michael. However, the report indicates the two people were shot inside the bathroom by the driver. The car was attacked by DANTE."

>
"What's the motive," Michael asked.

>
"We don't know. With malicious reprogramming, the computer personality is capable of extreme violence. It is imperative that you locate and disable him post hastily, as well as collect any leads about the other TKR vehicles."

>
"About that disabling part. You're saying that I have to climb into the cockpit of each vehicle, insert a mini-cd disk into each

computer, and initiate their auto shut-down sequence."

>
The old man nodded. "Should it become necessary, yes. It was a method designed by the late Team Knight Rider member Trek.

Unfortunately, it has never been tested out. However, at the moment, we are only concerned about DANTE. It is quite apparent that someone has decrypted his primary over-ride encryption lockout and may have reprogrammed him."

>
The brunette in the background stopped shuffling around and marched impatiently to the screen.

>
"Dammit Michael, yes, you do! Please, you don't realize just what these vehicles can do. They have Formulation One technology installed in their chassis, which makes them very dangerous. Reprogramming them to kill has only made it worse!"

>
Even near the age of forty, she was still very pretty. There were more worry lines on her face, but her eyes still sparkled with the youthfulness that was her personality. Not that she showed it much, but it was there.

>
The anger fled as fast as it had appeared. "Please Michael!" she

>pleaded. "I...I designed the weaponry that killed innocent people.

I
know what they can do-"

>
"Bonnie, stop it. Stop blaming yourself," he said in a stern voice. He softened his tone. "I know you feel responsible for what happened, but it wasn't your fault. None of us, not Devon, not I, not you, not even the Foundation had any clue this could happen."

>
A new voice spoke up. It came out of nowhere, yet everywhere at the same time.

>
"Michael's right Bonnie. Please don't blame yourself. There was a 0.45 percent chance anyone of us would have overlooked the error. We have had our mainframe broken into in the past. Since then, our security systems and outside link protocols have been augmented."

>
The voice was kind, light, and friendly. It carried a slight Boston accent when it spoke.

>
"I, for one, must agree with Devon. We must concentrate on locating the vehicles and disabling their personalities," KITT said.

>3 digital lines representing his voice box lit up with red lines as he talked. It was a poor substitute for a mouth, but to all concerned, it worked very well.

>Michael scoffed at his partner. "Easy for you to say! I have to do the climbing in and inserting the disk!"

>"Oh, I see!" KITT said sarcastically. "I suppose you are getting a little heavy around the waist area. Spending a little too much time dozing off in your guard tower?" he needled.

>Michael sat up straighter in his comfortable seat. "Oh yeah? I'll show you what a man of my stature can do!"

>He pushed down on the accelerator. The digital speedometer began climbing at a furious rate.

>"Good luck Michael," Devon said in the way of closing. "Remember, intelligence indicates that Erica West has relocated to the Malibu Beach area. She may be able to assist you. We will, of course, continue to pursue our end here. We'll call if anything turns up."

>Bonnie smiled at Michael. "Thanks you guys. I'll try to stop blaming myself so much."

>"That's it! Take a load off! Don't push yourself too hard!" Michael encouraged.

>She looked offended. "What? The way you handle that car, it's a

miracle I can keep it running!"

>"Awwwww, not you too!"

>She smiled half-heartedly. Her spirits were improving. After so many years, seeing and hearing those two together never failed to improve her mood. Despite the crisis, it felt good to smile at something.

>"Take care KITT. You too Michael."

>Her words carried true feelings and fondness.

>"You got it!"

>The holographic image disappeared.

>"Michael, would you consider slowing down?" KITT asked.

>Michael just laughed and pushed the accelerator harder.

>KITT just groaned.

>

>The night before...

>
Rick had left the house to purchase some items. Tom, having been told to stay inside the house, grew restless. He had rarely ever been scared before. Cops had meant little to him. But when his group of contacts at the police department failed to pay off the cops, he had become worried. After spending some days in the safety of his brother's getaway house, he had regained his sense of immortality.

>
That was not all...

>
Tom had a psychological problem: he needed women. It was like a power to him. He needed to feel in control of a woman. To him it wasn't a problem. It wasn't a desire that bothered him. The power was like a drug. It gave him the ultimate high.

>
So it was without wonder that he found himself at the dance club. His brother had brought him here once. During that time, he had pointed out one of the regular dancers. Tom had spotted her, and from that time on, he was mesmerised.

>
Her name was Angela Baker, and she was the most gorgeous and talented dancers at the establishment.

>
Afterward her dance number, he found himself drawn to her like a magnet. The familiar hunger grew within him. A heat began flaming his soul.

>
She was with a guy and another couple. He waited until she was by herself before he approached.

>
It wasn't hard to talk to her. Tom had long ago figured out women, and the exact buttons to push. Angela was challenging, but Tom knew all the moves, plus a few more he invented. It was a talent he had developed into a fine art. After 3 more solo meetings, Tom convinced her to leave her boyfriend and other friends to play pool.

>For half-an-hour he flirted, with her responding. But Tom underestimated Angela. At some point, she came to her senses. Realizing she was bordering on the brink of cheating on her boyfriend, Angela beat a hasty retreat. But by then, his being was filled with a perverse lust he could not deny.

>He pursued her in vain, but was vehemently told off. Unable to contain his desires, he snatched his gun from the small of his back, and hiding the gun between him and her led her to the men's bathroom. Locking the door behind him, he proceeded, at gunpoint to have her strip.

>With tears running down her eyes and a distraught look in her eyes, Angela stripped.

>Radiating with lust and untold heights of power, he brutally raped her.

>In the middle of forcing her to give him oral sex, the men's room

door suddenly was kicked in.

>Shocked, Tom looked into the mirror to see Angela's boyfriend. It was almost hilarious to see the contortions of his face, as he saw his girlfriend of two years kneeling on the dirty floor, giving oral sex to a stranger. His facial expressions went from shock, to disbelief, to betrayal, to pure anger.

>It was such a high for Tom. With blood pounding in his veins, he yelled, then climaxed in Angela's mouth.

>Angela's boyfriend charged with wild abandon, all manners of tactics thrown to the wind.

>Tom grabbed his prized and broken female and simply stepped out of the way.

>The man crashed into the sink, shattering the mirror with his face.
Tom had laughed hysterically, then put the barrel of his Colt .45 to the man's head and pulled the trigger. A roaring sound eclipsed the battle. The bullet punched through Angela's boyfriend's head, splattering his brains all over the white-tiled wall.

>
Once again, Tom had underestimated Angela. A searing pain almost doubled him over.

>
Angela was gripping his penis with her teeth and biting down.

>
Hard.

>
Yelling, Tom shot her in the head, killing her instantly. He turned around and saw a two people in the doorway. It was Angela's friends, Cody and Lani. Snap-aiming his handgun, he squeezed off 3 rounds.

>But Cody moved fast. He threw himself sideways, slamming his girlfriend out of harm's way.

>By the time Tom had painfully gotten his pants back on, the hallway outside the bathroom had emptied. Predictably, everyone was racing for the exits at record pace.

>Running outside he saw Cody and Lani fleeing in a blue Grand Prix. Without thinking, he fired his last remaining rounds at the car, then ran for his own vehicle.

>The Ford Expedition's door opened for him. He swung the vehicle around and raced after Cody and Lani.

>It wasn't much of a chase. The Knight Industries engine had more than enough power and speed to outpace the Grand Prix. He rammed them hard, crumpling the trunk easily.

>Lani screamed as the impact drove them against their seats. Barely recovering, Cody regained control and gave the car everything it had.
Miraculously, they seemed to pull inexplicably farther and farther away.

>
Then Tom had activated the Expedition's cohesive beam weapons.

>Two shots burned through the trunk and back seat. One seared Cody's arm, causing him to involuntarily wrench the wheel around.

>A missile fired from the truck, just missing the car. It blasted into the pavement, throwing the car off the road.

>Cody and Lani were rendered unconscious by multiple injuries as the car cartwheeled off the shoulder and into the ditch.
Tom fled the scene.

>
When he got back home, Rick had come back. Furious at his brother's stupidity, he had threatened to kill him for exposing them. Angry with himself and with his brother, Tom left the house. As each moment passed, he grew more furious. He wanted someone to pay for his ruined night. Throwing discretion to the wind, he returned to finish off Cody and Lani.

>
But by then the cops had arrived. After a short gun battle that

left

>him in critical condition, he was arrested and flown to the County
Hospital.

>

>Presently...

>
A shiny, black Pontiac Firebird pulled into the parking lot of Baywatch headquarters, and parked next to a well-waxed yellow Baywatch Patrol truck.

>
From longstanding habit, Michael gave the truck a once-over. He grunted in admiration of the nice shine.

>
"So Michael, is this where you spent 16 of your years?" Kitt asked.

>Michael Knight sat in the car with the engine turned off. The crash of the nearby waves, the smell of the clear salt air, the voices of hundreds of beachers, overwhelmed his defenses.

>"Yeah buddy," he whispered, almost too silent for even the extra-sensitive audio pick-ups to hear.

>The man known as Michael Knight aka Mitch Buchannon aka Michael Arthur Long, sat helpless as fond nostalgia washed over his thoughts.
His life, long as it was, carried more memories than most people put together in a life-time.

>
He had first entered the shadowy world of war during a very young age. Michael Long used to be a Navy Seal. During his career, he had done many deeds that brought him little satisfaction. He had killed many men and women as part of classified missions. Back then, it had been black and white. There were the bad guys and there were the good guys. Navy Seals were surgical teams, who performed surgical strike missions. They hit their targets, accomplished the missions, and got out.

>
In and out, just like sex, his Master Sergeant used to say.

>He had seen innocents brutally murdered on many of those missions.

He had tried so hard to purge those memories, but now he knew the memories would always be a part of who he was. He wanted to believe he was making a difference. He needed to believe. But ever mission served to remind him of how cloak and dagger each op was, how thankless the job became, how meaningless. He promised himself, time and time again, that he would make a difference society could judge. But the life of a Navy Seal did not permit that.

>Unable to keep lying to his conscience, he left the teams in search of a different life. He entered the Californian Police Academy and began anew. Life agreed with him. Slowly, he steadily rose throughout the ranks. His zest for life and for his job earned him a reputation. He became one of the best on the force. His fellow detectives and colleagues all looked up to him. He enjoyed what he did. It truly lived up to his moral goals. But then, at the peak of his career, he attracted the wrong attention.

>The criminal element realized a young cop named Michael Long had become a danger to their work. Their power and money could not influence the young cop. He was too pure, too focused, too morally conscious, too full of life, to be persuaded. So the powers that be inserted a turn-coat; someone who the young cop could respect, admire, and trust with his life.

>She was perfect. The woman was charming, beautiful, cunning, and above all, irresistible. She also seemed like a fellow Officer of the Peace, who had a work ethic similar to his own. Then, on the fateful night, she showed her true colours. That was the night she had shot him point blank in the face. As he lay bleeding to death in an isolated field, lying in the pool of light created by the headlights of his idling black Pontiac Trans-Am, he had been deathly

afraid.
How could a woman be turned so? She was beautiful. She was brilliant, smart, a bundle of energy, and talented. How could a woman be so evil, so filled with hatred? How could I have been so wrong? Why did she do this? Why? WHY?

>
In his dying moments, he had often asked this question, but never receiving an answer in that cold, barren, field. No one was there to answer it for him. Slowly, his life had ebbed away.

>That is, it would have, if he had not been found by a man named Wilton Knight.

>Wilton Knight, owner of Knight Industries, was a visionary. He envisioned a world where crime would be under control, where people could stroll the nights without having to worry about their safety. He wanted a society that could be free from the fear crime. Not only was Wilton Knight a visionary, he was also a very rich and resourceful multi-millionaire. On that night, Wilton Knight rescued Michael Long from his cold, lonely death in the field.
That had been the beginning of a very different life. It was an adventure that one never forgot.

>
Mr. Wilton Knight had used his influence, prestige, and money to make one of his dreams a reality. He founded the Foundation for Law And Government, known to those it concerned, as FLAG.

>
In its earliest conception, FLAG was a private organization, a very special detective agency operating within the law. Its capabilities were used for cases police agencies were unable to touch. FLAG's main concern had been criminals and organizations that eluded conventional law enforcement efforts.

>
Michael Long was to be its sole human field operator.

>But field operators, as per Operating Procedures, needed a partner.
Wilton had also used much of his considerable resources to fund the research for computer intelligence; an artificial intelligence unlike any ever created on earth.

>
His team led by a brilliant and beautiful scientist named Bonnie Barstow, succeeded.

>
The result was the birth of the Knight Industries Two Thousand, or more commonly known to its operators as KITT. The Knight Industries Two Thousand was a top-secret super "car", a heavily modified Pontiac Trans-Am, in which the advanced artificial intelligence resided. Many had said KITT was far ahead of its time.

>
Indeed, KITT was.

>
KITT was one of a kind. It was the name the artificial intelligence was christened with. The most important and fascinating facet was KITT was self-aware. KITT was alive. KITT could feel, hear, and see like a normal human. In many ways, the AI could do much more. KITT also possessed emotion, a trait only known to upper level organisms. This allowed KITT to develop a personality, which interacted with other humans.

>
The "car" was fitted with a host of the most state of the art electronics the century had to offer. Its technology was 21st century. It was the perfect partner in the crusade to fight crime.

>The body of the Pontiac Trans-Am had been augmented with a highly classified Molecular Bond. Cases involving F.L.A.G. dealt with unconventional criminals, most of them dangerous beyond the norm. The environments presented to the Foundation's operators were nothing short of deadly. Thus the Foundations sought multiple ways to endow its operators with the uttermost protection possible. This Molecular Bond strengthened the molecular structure of the car to the point where only direct hits by missiles could cause any damage.
But KITT had needed a driver. The driver had to be one who also believed

in Wilton's ideals, in his ultimate dream. He/she needed to be one who would pledge their loyalty to helping make society a better place.

>
That night, a young cop who's ambitions were as great as Wilton's dreams was admitted into the Foundation's hospital...and there he died.

>
The man once known as Michael Long underwent surgery, where his face was changed. Under the direction of Wilton Knight, he was given a new identity. He was also bestowed a new mission by the Foundation for Law And Government.

>
That day, Michael Knight was born into the world.

>
But before Wilton Knight could see the realization his life-long dream, he died.

>
His vast fortune and resources was left to his trusted associate and friend, Devon Miles.

>
Devon Miles was a man who identified with Wilton's dreams. He was compassionate, charismatic, brave, intelligent, driven, and a leader. Above all, he was a true father to the operators of the Knight Industries Two Thousand Project. Under his management, the Project took off to new horizons and adventures Wilton could only have dreamed of.

>
We were so successful, Michael thought, as he gazed out over the expanse of the rolling waves.

>
Off to the side, 4 women in bright bikini's threw a pink Frisbee around, laughing and jumping in the soft sand.

>
The roll of the incoming surf diffused through his soul, calming his inner self like it always did.

>
The Foundation had been closed down and retired when they had become a liability. It was a new government, a new era, and the 1990's had seen the removal of the Foundation. The government had wanted a more predictable future. They had wanted to control the Foundation. Devon had fought their demands. But under immense Federal Pressure and haughtiness, he had been forced to resign. When Devon left office, the Foundation left with him.

>
Michael's eyes watched the surf recede from the sandy shore, erasing everything that had been there, leaving behind a flat, wet, surface of sand.

>
That was the thing about time. Everything could change given enough time...even them.

>
The government had been so sure of themselves. They had believed in controlling all faucets of the American government. Organizations like the Foundation, was a loose cannon, a horse with no reins. The administration could not accept them for what they were, not even after their past accomplishments. If people could not conform with their demands, they did what they could to make life miserable.

>The end result had been the incorporation of the Foundation for Law And Government into existing intelligence agencies, and the retirement of FLAG.

>With the retirement of FLAG came an inevitable re-modelling of the Knight Industries armature. The government, hoping to improve upon what Wilton Knight started, had approached the Senate with the idea of creating another team similar to Michael Knight and Kitt, albeit with a more militaristic theme and ties to the government. It hired a technology company named Myland Industries to produce the next generation Kitt.

>The project was named KRO.

>Despite the government's cautions, it failed horribly. The results were needless human death, a field operator with a criminal mind, a multi-million dollar assault vehicle possessed by an insane

artificial intelligence, and the shutdown of the KRO Project.
In frustration, they reached out and contacted the only people who knew enough about its project to help them: Bonnie Barstow and Kitt.

>At first, Bonnie and Kitt had vehemently denied any offer the government gave them.

>Bonnie had taken up advanced robotic studies at Harvard University. Michael and Kitt were happily engaged in a tour around the country.
It came as little surprise when the government embarked yet again on another project. This time, it decided to produce five vehicles using the Myland technology.

>
But without the knowledge locked away in Bonnie's and Kitt's minds, they were subject to catastrophic failure.

>The whole project was blackmail, pure and simple, but Bonnie and Kitt could not stand by as the government abused their technology.
For that reason, they joined the effort, in hopes that the project, named Team Knight Rider (TKR), would not be subjugated to failure that would cost human lives.

>
On the other hand, with harsh allegations of deceit and distrust between them, Devon Miles and Michael Knight had not been asked to return. They had protested loudest about working for the government, and thus, the least trusted.

>
Though they were free to lead their own lives, Devon and Michael remained steady-fast friends with Bonnie and Kitt. They often communicated secretly, via encrypted calls and e-mail.

>Still, it wasn't the same.
Rather than suspend themselves in a past that would never be, Devon and Michael went forward with their lives.

>
Michael had thought about returning to the life of a cop. But so many years had passed, so many tribulations, conquests, near death experiences, and losses. He could not return to his former life.

>And so it was that Michael Knight, once known as Michael Long, had faded into obscurity. All that remained of his past was a grave stone in Washington DC that read "Michael Knight". He gave himself a new identity, a new life and a new outlook on life.

>After Michael Knight "retired", Mitch Buchannon was created in its stead - with Bonnie's help of course. Michael had always been drawn to the surf, to the beach where the sun's rays would give the world a final caress before disappearing beneath the fathoms of the mystic ocean.

>There, Mitch Buchannon had begun lifeguarding. He developed new friends, had a house, responsibilities, and fell in love. He married, and had a kid, while climbing up the ladder of success. Then came the divorce, but being who he was, Mitch Buchannon pulled through.
It was a life others would envy. There was no other way about it. For 16 long years he did what he loved. The weather was great, the sun was great, and the people he worked with had become very fond of him.

>
He could still recall the names of those he worked with. Cody Madison, Caroline Holden, Stephanie Holden, Jordan Tate, Lani McKensie, CJ (what had happened to CJ anyways? Didn't he hear she somehow ended up working for some sort of professional bodyguard unit called VIP?), Donna Marco, Michael Newman, Neely Capshaw, Ashley Capshaw, Craig Pomeroy, Jill Riley, Eddie Kramer, Shauni McClain, Garner Ellerbe, Summer, Matthew Brody, Logan Fowler, April Giminski, Jack Darius, Skylar Bergman, and so many more! Those were just a few out of all the memorable people he had worked with on the beach, partied with off the beach, and shared a part of his life with. His life had been one hell of a roller-coaster ride, and the people of Baywatch had made it no less interesting.

>
Then came the news of the Foundation's re-activation and sudden disbandment. That had hit him very hard. No matter what anyone said, no matter what he thought, or what he tried to put behind him, the Foundation had always been a special part of his past. The closure of a part of his life had stabbed deep. At the time, he was sure, in some part of the world, Devon Miles would have felt the same pang of regret. That day had past, and Mitch Buchannon kept on swimming, sunning, flirting with beautiful women on the beach, and saving lives. But neither he, nor those who cared could ignore the steady decline of society brought on by the real world. Capitalism was declining into barbarism, and anarchy was slowly shaping his world into a chaotic hell. It began slowly, but built with each token of death and destruction brought on by a society slowly being ravaged by time. Soon Mitch Buchannon had felt Michael Knight trying to resurface. Try as he might, he had not been able to ignore the fact that something had to be done. He had almost refused, but somehow, with society's state declining like it was, he had felt responsible to do something. Even if it meant leaving his present life.

>

>The past...

>
It was a warm night. The stars twinkled with their own light, independent of how or what Mother Earth did. Salty, cool, ocean breeze gently blew away the clouds of pollution that threatened the vast velvety night canopy. You could look forever and not get bored of the night sky. There was so much to see, so much to dream about. Hope, optimism, wonder, sadness: these were all the emotions felt by Mitch as he sat in one of the sturdy wooden chairs on the porch of his seaside house. Two tender arms cradled baby Ashley as he gently patted her back.

>
A light growth of rich blonde hair grew on the baby's head. Two marvellous blue eyes, innocent and curious, stared at Mitch. The baby gurgled.

>
"What do you think you're trying to get me to do?" the baby could have said.

>
"C'mon, burp you little tike, burp!" Mitch said in a friendly voice.

>She had just finished her formula meal, and he was hoping baby Ashley would show some sign of liking it.

>The baby gurgled again.

>Mitch laughed softly.

>'So tender, innocent, and full of wonder', Mitch thought. The life he held in his hands was incredibly fragile. It wouldn't take much physical force to damage the baby. Nor would it take much mental stress to begin deforming the baby's way of thought.

>He looked up into the infinite night sky. Orion, Hercules, The Big Dipper, the constellations were all very visible tonight. The sea breeze was doing an excellent job of keeping the fires of war from LA back.

>They were all quite lucky out here. He had heard and seen first-hand the urban wars that took its toll on the beautiful and prosperous Megatropolis of Los Angeles. Fires raged out of control, gangs and police raged war in the streets. Innocents were brutally murdered, shot without any regard for their lives. Once, during a brief stay in town, he had seen and prevented a pretty teenage girl from being abducted, nearly ending up dead himself from the effort. Luckily, they had both made it. But he knew many others did not. Slavery was on the rise. People were slowly reverting back to the sadistic days of barbarians.

>"Mitch?" a voice asked softly beside him.

>He started gently, then twisted his head around to see who had

spoken.

>Neely Capshaw grinned down at him. Her light blonde hair floated gently around her shoulders as she placed 2 ice-tea's on the drink table beside his seat, then reached out for the little baby.

>"Here," Mitch said, gently handing over the small human.

>Neely took her daughter into the crook of her arm.

>She cast a brilliant smile on her face. "Hi sweetie! It's mommy!"

>The baby gurgled in her language. Human adults could never understand their language. But that didn't matter, she was content in talking in her tongue.

>"She hasn't burped yet," Mitch told her. "Thanks for the drinks!"
Neely smiled at him. "Oh, no problem!"

>
She sank into the other chair opposite of the little table. "I thought you could use the company."

>
"Yeah, I sure could."

>
burp

>
"Ohhhhh, good girl Ashley!"

>
They sat for a while, listening to the cooing sounds made by baby Ashley. The bright moon cast its reflection on the still waters of the inlet in front of Mitch's house. Dots of light, representing the stars, glowed faintly in the glassy surface of the water.

>
"Penny for your thoughts Mitch."

>
He glanced over at Neely. The young woman looked back, waiting for an answer, while patting the baby on the back.

>
"Just thinking..."

>
"About..."

>
He chuckled. She wasn't about to let him off the hook, and he knew it.

>
Neely and her daughter had been living with him and Hobbie for over 2 months. She didn't make enough lifeguarding to take care of a house, a baby, and herself at the same time. In her time of despair, he had convinced her to stay with him and his son. Baby Ashley had been immaterial in the process. During that time, he and she had become very good friends. There was a relaxed atmosphere about them. Sharing the house had become a daily routine. They enjoyed each other's company without the embarrassment of being strangers.

>
"Awww, you don't wanna know. They're bad thoughts, dark thoughts, things you don't wanna know."

>
"Yes I do!"

>
He sighed. Maybe he was getting too old. That could be the reason why he was thinking such bad thoughts.

>
"Well, I was thinking of how lucky we are to live out here on the coast."

>
She blinked her large eyes. "You mean away from L.A.?"

>
"Yeah. You know there's a war going on back there? Out here, people come to relax and get away from it all. We're lucky we live out here! We don't have to live in fear every day of our lives. All we worry about is saving the next victim, and putting enough sunblock on to prevent a sunburn. Have you done into town lately? Half the time it's dark and the air is putrid!"

>
He saw Neely look down and bit her lower lip. She had nothing to say.

>
"Hey, you asked!"

>
She looked back up. "I know Mitch."

>
Blowing out a breath, she said, "You know, sooner or later it'll all catch up with us. It's inevitable, so why think about it? Each time I do, I see Ashley growing up in a world run by punks, deviants, and lawlessness, so I don't try to think about it. It's too sad Mitch! I mean, I don't want that for my daughter, but what can I do? What can any of us do Mitch! The way it's going, no one can make a difference anymore, so just put it out of my mind. I want the best for Ashley, and if I have to move to the North Pole, then that's what I'll do."

>Mitch gazed at her thoughtfully. Her comment had been made with remorse, but the effect was opposite on Mitch.

>He listened as she skillfully changed the topic.

>They sat together, sipping their drinks, talking long into the night.
Her last statement ran over and over again in his head.

>Hobbie had understood. His only son knew everything about Mitch Buchannon and his long past; he had agreed that Neely had been wrong. There was something a small, private group of people could do. One person could make a difference. His son was proud of his old man, and it wouldn't do to let that image down, nor let down those who could not help themselves no more.

>Besides, Hobbie was old enough to take care of himself.

>Mitch Buchannon had left Baywatch, only to return to the Foundation's mansion to find Devon and Bonnie already there. There had been no need to call them, a silent call of duty and honour had already brought them there. Together, Devon, Bonnie, Michael, and a happily reactivated KITT had decided, to a person, to do what they could. It wasn't much, but one dying man's mantra refused to be cowed.

>"One man can make a difference."

>And for many long years, Michael and Kitt had done just that.

>
The present...

>

>"Your awfully quiet Michael," KITT said.

>"Hmmm? Oh, just thinking KITT."

>He looked down at the dashboard.

>This car was not so different from the one he had worked in for nearly 10 years. The layout of the dash was nearly the same, with the bank of equipment slanted over to his side. But there were more functions, more lights, more touch sensitive surfaces than he had been used to. There were no more T.V. monitors. That had been phased out by holographic projection.

>He looked up. Too bad the roof doesn't fold back, he thought.

>"You seem to be doing that quite often," KITT commented.

>Michael looked at the triple lights that pulsed with KITT's voice.

>"That happens when you get old and senile, or so I'm told."

>"You are NOT senile."

>"KITT, I'm over 40 year's old."

>"Still, that does not make you senile. You're body is in perfect health, and you are still quite athletic. Still, I suppose you are a little more prudish now."

>"Prudish! I am not a prude!"

>A comfortable silence followed.

>"Michael, do you ever think about Bonnie much?"

>Michael was startled by the question. It was one he hadn't really

expected.

>"Well," he said, stalling for stime. "Of course I do. She is one of my closest friends."

>"Do you ever think of her more than that?"

>"What are you trying to do? Play match-maker?"

>"I only thought you two might make a good couple."

>Michael laughed then, but it was a laugh filled with remorse. "Kitt, don't even try. You have no idea what you're getting yourself into."
"You know Michael, she really is fond of you."

>
Michael made a face. "She has two kids. It's a miracle she came back to work with the Foundation, what with all that she left at home."

>He paused. "But that still doesn't mean we have an understanding between the two of us. Bonnie is very special to all of us. We're family."

>Family. That word struck a chord in Michael Knight, a crusader for the innocent, the powerless, in a world where criminals operated above the law. No one knew more than Michael how much he wanted a family, a wife-someone he could grow old with.

>Inadvertently, his mind once again travelled back in time.
Family.

>
There was something Michael Knight was a complete failure at.

>His first marriage had ended in disaster, with his wife walking out on Hobbie and him out of hatred.

>The second marriage also ended with a marital break-up; although they were still friends and had worked together at

Baywatch.
Michael's third marriage never took place. His girlfriend, whom he loved with all his heart, had been a victim of terminal cancer. She had died in his arms, leaving him with memories of their happiness together. The loss still tore at his heart.

>
A tear slid down from his eyes.

>
On that day, something in Michael had broke. He had silently vowed never to get involved in another relationship again.

>
All he ended up doing was hurting.

>
"Michael, I'm so sorry. I didn't mean to do this to you."

>He quickly wiped at the tear. "No, it's not your fault Kitt. I'm okay."

>In a soft voice, Kitt asked, "Do you want to talk about it?"
Michael shook his head. He patted the console. "Thank buddy.

>Maybe I'll take you up on it someday, but not right now."

>"Okay Michael. But remember: I'll always have time for you. So will Bonnie."

>Michael smiled appreciatively. "Thanks pal."

>"Your welcome Michael."

>"Speaking of family, I believe-"

>Michael's eyes lit up as a tall, trim figure stepped around the corner of the blue building. Grinning, he opened the doors and stepped out of the customize black Pontiac Firebird.

>"Dad!"

>Laughing, Michael hugged his son. "C'mere Hobbs!"

>He closed his eyes. "It's good to see you again! I missed you!"

>Hobbie hugged his father. "I missed you too! It's been a few month's since I've talked to you."

>They broke apart.

>"So are you on another mission Mr. Knight?"

>Both of them broke into laughter.

>They always joked about Michael's many aliases. He had had quite a few legitimate names.

>Michael ran an appraising eye over his son. He was tall, nearly as tall as he was. His dark brown hair was cut short. It was spike with Gel or something. He was filling out nicely. His body was tight and fit, just like his dad. He as a good-looking teenager.

>"So how's it going?"

>"Pretty well. I'm on leave from school, so I decided to come down here and relax. Besides, I needed to keep up my qualifications as Captain on the junior lifeguarding team."

>"You causing the Henderson's any trouble?"

>With him gone, and Hobbie not quite legal age, the Henderson's (whom where great friends of theirs) had been more than happy to accept the role of guardians for Hobbie.

>"Great. They're just super."

>Michael's eyes twinkled. "How's Lisa?"

>Hobbie's eyes grew wide, then he blushed.

>"How-" he sputtered. "How did you know?"

>Michael grinned slyly. Lisa was the Henderson's only daughter. She was Hobbie's age, tall, blonde, green eyed, friendly, and very attractive. Apparently, they had become quite a couple over the last two months.

>Hobbie gawked at his dad. It seemed there was nothing that got by the old man, even when he was away.

>"Oh, a little bird told me. So you two've been going out for the last two months?"

>Hobbie's jaw dropped. Man!

>KITT remained silent as he watch all of this. He began to feel Michael's son had a big disadvantage in the meeting. It was time to even up the score.

>"Mitch," he said, the Boston accented voice clearly heard in the air.

>"All you did was phone the Henderson's house and ask. Then you told Mr. Henderson to keep your phone call a secret."

>Hobbie shut his mouth. He should have known. A warm feeling filled his heart. His dad would always be watching over him. Nevertheless, he punched his dad on the shoulder.

>"Dad!"

>Michael took a step backwards. He turned to regard KITT.

>"Oh, thanks a lot KITT!" he groaned sarcastically.

>"You're welcome Mitch," KITT responded warmly. He felt pretty smug.

>"Wow, it talk's!" Hobbie exclaimed.

>Michael rolled his eyes. If he had a dime for every time he heard that statement...

>If KITT had eyes, he would have rolled them too.

>"Hobbie, I'd like you to meet KITT. KITT, Hobbie."

>"It's a pleasure to finally meet you Hobbie. You're a handsome young man," the voice said, coming out of the car.

>Hobbie felt amazement roll over him. He took a step toward KITT.

>He stared in amazement at the car.

>"It's a pleasure to meet you too KITT."

>"Thank you. Michael has said nothing but great things about you."
Hobbie ran a hand along the red tracer that ran back and fourth along the red band set within the front of the nose.
>
"A brand new 1999 Pontiac Firebird. Cool! This is neat!"

>
KITT 'watched' him feel his optic scanner. He could also feel his caress.
>
"That is my electronic eye. It lets me 'see' things, much like your organic eye. But with mine, I can see objects in the visible, infrared, ultra-violet, X-ray, thermo, sound waves, and many others."

>
"Radical!"

>
Hobbie ran a hand along the smooth, black metallic paint. He rapped his knuckles on the hood. The surface felt hard, unlike a normal car hood. Of course, it had to be. His dad said KITT was bulletproof.

>Michael watched as his best friend and son became aquatinted. The sight of KITT and his son interacting gave him a warm feeling. He had wanted to do this the moment KITT had been activated. It just felt right. KITT felt like a part of him, just like his son was also a part of him. Seeing them together was like bridging an over-looked gap.

>"Well, I'll leave you two to get better aquatinted. I have to go see someone."

>He turned around and walked away.

>"Would you like to sit down Hobbie?"

>Hobbie's eyes lit up. "I would!" He made his way over to the driver's side. The door opened by itself.

>KITT grew occupied at getting to know Hobbie and monitoring Michael through his comlink. If he had paid more attention, he would have noticed the peculiar energy emissions coming from the silver F-150 twenty yards away.

>
Steve sat in his truck. He watched the parking lot, observing the employees coming to and from the large blue building. The black Pontiac Firebird seemed a little out-of-place next to all the yellow trucks, but preoccupied with finding Erica, he dismissed it out of his mind.

>
The TKR vehicle and the Knight Industries Two Thousand sat twenty yards apart, neither noticing one another.

>
Finally, after getting tired of waiting, Steve slipped out of the truck. He grabbed a bag and slung it over his shoulder, then strolled nonchalantly over to the employees entrance and walked in.

>He found himself in a tight corridor. Inspecting the rooms it contained, he finally found one that looked like an employee locker room. Going over it with a fine-tooth comb, he found an employee time sheet.

>There! Erica West 5:30.

>Steve smiled. He had her.

>Stealing a set of keys he found, he had his way back to the truck.
He only had 2 hours to wait.

>

>Michael slowly made his way up the familiar steps.
So many memories lay here. He must have climbed these same steps a million times before. Fond recollections of his lifeguarding days came rushing back at him.

>

>"Well, I'm heading out to my tower," Leslie said, stepping away from the group of lifeguards.

>"See you later," Marco replied.

>"I'll give you a lift," Manny told her.

>"Sure!"

>They could spend a little more time with each other on the way to the tower.

>The rest of the lifeguards resumed their talk with Skylar, Ironman, and Jack.

>She stepped out into the bright sunlight. Her eyes automatically squinted in the bright light. Taking a moment to let her sight become comfortable, she scanned the beach...and froze.

>Coming up the stairs was a tall figure dressed in blue jeans and a blue jean jacket.

>He looked decidedly familiar.

>Her heart flew into her throat.

>Then those same blue-eyes stared right at her; the famous grin grew on his face.

>It was him.

>"Mitch!!" she screamed in joy.

>Leslie launched her body at Mitch. She wrapped her arms around him in a vise-like grip.

>"Ooffff!" Michael exclaimed, as her lithe body hit him in a good tackle.

>Pandemonium followed her joyous outburst.

>Chaos erupted inside as every lifeguard tried to be the first out the door and onto the deck.

>Michael was surprised when Leslie's weight hit him. But he was plainly terrified as a huge wall of female's, dressed in bright orange swimming suits, plowed into him.

>"Mitch!"

>"Mitch!"

>"Oh Mitch!"

>He barely was able to hold his ground.

>Marco, Leslie, Skylar, April, and Neely clutched him tightly.
He gasped for air.
>
"Okay! Okay! Hey loosen up! I can't breath! You're going to have a victim right here!"
>
They all laughed at that.
>
"I get to do CPR!"
>
"I get to do AR."
>
"No me!"
>
"No me!"
>
Mitch pretended to struggle harder, which caused them to laugh louder, but released their grips.
>
"Mitch! It's so good to see you. We missed you!" Leslie said.

>
"Yeah! It's really been kind of dull around here without you!" Neely exclaimed.
>
He looked at all of them.
>
So young and energetic, he thought.
>
"I missed you all too."
>
"Hey, how's the kid?" he asked Neely.
>
She smiled. "Just great Mitch! She took her first steps 2 weeks ago."
>
"No!"
>
Nodding her head, she responded, "Oh yes!"
>
"That's great."
>
He looked at Marco. "So what's this I hear about you going full time at University?"
>
She held up two fingers. "Second year at the University of California!"
>
"Good for you!"
>
"I'm going with her!" Leslie said.
>
"Really?" Surprise was evident in Michael's face.
>
"Mmm hmmm."
>
"As?"

>
"Dancing instructor!"
>
"Well that's great!"
>
More and more lifeguards joined the ever-growing crowd on the balcony. As time went by, Mitch became the main attraction of the building. This went on until a guard at dispatch ran up. The guards at the towers had been ranting and raving. They all wanted to know where the hell their replacements were. Almost everyone was over-due by half-an-hour.
>
Skylar spoke up. "It's great to see you Mitch, but I have to go. It's my shift."
>
He reached over and hugged her. "It's good to see you Skylar. We'll do some catching up. All of us."
>
"Looking forward to it! Bye!"
>
One by one they disappeared down the stairs after making him hold his promise.
>
"Mitch! Hey, how's it going!" Manny greeted him.
>
"Still hanging in there Manny."
>
"You're looking good for an older guy!"
>
"I am not old...just more refined."
>
They both laughed at that.
>
Manny suddenly grew sombre. "So, have you heard about what happened here?"
>
Michael nodded. His eyes radiated a familiar compassion. "I heard. I'm sorry about Tyler and Angela. They didn't deserve it. Tell me about what happened."
>
Manny spent the next few minutes relating everything he knew about the club incident.
>
Michael listened, then asked, "Where is this kid?"
>
"He's at the County hospital," Manny told him. "But nobody can get close to him. There are Federal Agents guarding him day in and day out."
>
"I'm sure I'll be able to persuade them," Michael said. Concern grew in his voice. "How are Lani and Cody?"
>
"They're over at the hospital as well. Cody is worse off than Lani. He'll be in traction for a month. Lani isn't much better off, but they'll make it. They're both pretty shaken up. I wish I could get my hands on the bastard that did this! I'd strangle the little fuck!"
>
Michael smiled thinly. "Get in line."
>
Just then, Leslie appeared at the bottom of the stairs. She waved impatiently at Manny.
>
"Well, I gotta drive Leslie over to her tower, but I'll see you later! It was great seeing you Mitch!"
>
"See you Manny!"
>
He clapped the muscular dark-haired man on the back, then stepped into the headquarters, where he was mobbed yet again, by more lifeguards.
>
Those who had been fuming in their towers raced back at full speed, having heard of Mitch's appearance through the grape-vine.

>But Michael didn't mind.
>"Hey, I just thought I'd drop by and visit!" he said in a friendly tone.
>Captain Keith spun around. Standing in the doorway was none other than Mitch Buchannon. His mouth dropped open in shock. It was a full two seconds before he recovered.
>Sonofabitch did that on purpose!
>"No, you cannot visit. This is Baywatch headquarters, not a junior high school. I suggest that if you are visiting, please do it after hours. People have to work here...at least I think they're working.

You left me a sad Baywatch Mitch. It's taken me a long time to fix up the slackers you have around here."

>'So that's why Leslie and Skylar are going to University,' Michael thought.

>Before they were fighting to stay at Baywatch when he pushed them to go. God knows Skylar wanted get her secondary education. But she loved Baywatch too much. It had been her life.

>Now he knew why she came to Baywatch sparingly.

>Michael ground his teeth. He had absolutely no like for Keith. Keith was a backpeddler, someone who built his career by leaching off of others. He always looked out for himself, which never failed to aggravate Michaels' sense of morality.

>Michael smiled. "So, finally got that cushy Captain's position you've always wanted I see. O'l dad finally came through for you huh?"

>Keith's complexion began turning red.

>"Don't you dare speak that way about my dad! He's done more for this country than you could ever amount to in your entire life!"

>Michael's smile grew wider. He was tempted to ask him which life he was referring to.

>"Keith, all your dad was ever good at was kissing ass. I see that you're following just fine in his footsteps."

>Behind Michael came stifled snickers of laughter. The office door was wide open, and Michael had no intention of shutting it.

>Everyone in the room couldn't help but smile. Many others outside the room had paused in their work to listen in.

>Keith's face grew livid. His cheeks quivered in anger.

>He raised a finger. "GET OUT!"

>Michael realized he had blown his one chance at diplomacy. He raised his hands in defeat and made to turn around.

>Then again, what chance did he really have?

>"GET OUT RIGHT NOW!" Keith yelled.

>Ah, to hell with diplomacy, Michael thought.

>"Dammit Keith, be reasonable. All I want to do is help! You know what I see when I look around me? I see Baywatch falling apart. Maybe it's hard for you to understand Keith, but this is a family! It is not a militant operation, but you're treating it like one!"

>Keith looked at Mitch with pure mayhem in his eyes. He gave Michael a powerful shove.

>"Fuck you! I don't need your advice!"

>"You know Keith, you used to be a petty beaurocrat, living out of daddy's pockets. Guess what, nothing's changed! Sad, isn't it!"

>"GET THE HELL OUT OF MY OFFICE, BEFORE I CALL THE COPS!"

>He shoved Michael again, moving the tall man a step closer to the doorway.

>"Ya know Keith, there's something I've been meaning to do for a long time," Michael remarked.

>"WHAT!!-"

>Michael spun around and hammered Keith with a solid right cross. The blow connected, sending Keith's body reeling backwards. He landed hard on top of his desk, scattering the paperwork neatly piled on top all over the floor. Keith slid off the top and slumped onto the ground, unconscious and sporting an extremely sore jaw.

>Michael adjusted his jacket and grinned. "Always wanted to do that."
The sombre sadness, which had settled up HQ like a heavy

fog since the double murder, lifted, if only for a short time. Amid claps and cheers, Michael held his head high and exited the office.

>
"Hi Mitch!"

>
"Hi April."

>
He enveloped her in a long hug.

>
Releasing her, he asked, "How are you doing?"

>
She smiled. "Okay I guess."

>
"Good! I'm glad you're still here. The guards need your experience."

>
She blushed. "Thank's Mitch. I love it here!" She stood up on her tiptoes and kissed him on the cheek.

>
Perplexed, but smiling, he asked, "What brung that on?"

>
April inclined her head to the still-unconscious body of Keith, her supervisor. Nobody was paying him any attention.

>
"That."

>
She lifted her hand and formed a fist. "Boom! One hit and the asshole goes down! Everyone here at some time has always wanted to do that, but we need our jobs."

>
Michael Knight/Mitch Buchannon laughed.

>
She smiled sadly. "It's so good to have you here Mitch. Will we see you around a little more?"

>
"Promise. We'll get together and have some drinks. All of us. Just like old times."

>
"Good! We've really missed you." She gave Mitch a long hug.

>
"Have you heard about-"

>
"Yes, I heard. Are you okay?"

>
She lowered her eyes. "She was my friend Mitch."

>
"I'm so sorry April."

>
Unexpectedly, she brought her hands up to her face. Her shoulders began short spasms. A small wailing sound escaped from behind her hands.

>
Michael stepped forward and held her tenderly.

>
April pressed her face into his chest and cried.

>
He held her protectively, giving her all the comfort he could. He whispered quietly into her ear, reassuring his friend.

>
"Oh Mitch-WHY?" she cried.

>
The sound of her sobs tore heavily at his heart. Michael understood what she was going through. He had lost friends before. There was nothing that could ever replace the dark void in your heart.

>
"Shhhh, it's okay. Let it out. Let it all out," he whispered soothingly, gently stroking her soft hair as she cried.

>

>Roger steered the car. He kept the speed well-over the speed limit. Beside him, Riggs held a map open. Idly, he traced their route while talking.

>"So then Laurna says we could use a sauna."

>"Sauna?" Perplexed, Roger asked, "Don't you already have a bathtub?"

>"Well, yeah, but Laurna wants something bigger."

>"Why do you want something bigger? Isn't the bathtub already big
enough?"

>
"C'mon Rog, when was the last time you tried to make the beast in your tub?"

>
"Hey! Mind your own business. What I do with my wife is my own business."

>
"I'm sorry, I'm speaking to the wrong authority here."

>
"What's that supposed to mean?"
>
"Hey Rog, pull over man!"
>
"Why?"
>
"I gotta take a leak!"
>
Roger rolled his eyes.
>
"You shouddda went back at the station."
>
"Awww, c'mon Rog, you're killing me! Look, that blue building over there. Pull into the parking lot."
>

>Steve woke with a start to the sound of a vehicle driving past him.
He had fallen asleep!
>
Blinking away the sleepiness, he followed a red Mazda as it slid into an employee-parking stall. An attractive woman with semi-long blonde hair stepped out. Shutting the door, she paused to check her purse, then walked over to the employee entrance.
>
It was her: Erica West.
>
Steve slipped from the truck, tucking the gun into his belt.

>
End Chapter 2.
>
Author's note: Chapter 3 will be continued at

><http://www.themestream.com>
>Look under the Topic: Arts - Fiction and Literature - Science Fiction and Fantasy <p><p>

End
file.